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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BEIRUT 001565

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/04/2027
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [MASS](#) [MCAP](#) [SY](#) [IS](#) [LE](#)
SUBJECT: LEBANON: DELAYS WITH GERMAN BORDER PILOT ENHANCE
BRITISH SKEPTICISM ABOUT ESDP BORDER MISSION

REF: A. BEIRUT 1504
[1](#)B. WARD/GRANT/IRWIN E-MAIL

Classified By: DCM WILLIAM GRANT FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D).

SUMMARY

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: At the October 4 weekly meeting for the German Northern Border Pilot Program (NBPP), donors listened to the long list of continuing delays affecting the launch date of the NBPP. During the meeting the proposed ESDP mission to the eastern border was raised, but the EU representative, Michael Miller, was reluctant to provide details to the larger group. Afterwards, the British representatives expressed their continued reservations about the Moratinos proposal and the idea that Germany would lead such a complex new mission. The UK reps suggested that enhanced managerial and logistical support would be needed from other EU countries in order for the NBPP to succeed. The British remain doubtful that an EU mission to the east could be successful in the current political environment. End Summary.

MORE DELAYS FOR NBPP

[1](#)2. (C) At the weekly donors meeting for the German Northern Border Pilot Program (NBPP) on October 4, Stefan Helmschrott, Deputy Coordinator of the NBPP, briefed donor countries on the progress of the pilot program. Helmschrott chaired the meeting in place of the NBPP coordinator, Detlef Karioth who will be leaving the mission in two weeks (reftel A). Helmschrott listed the long list of continuing delays affecting the launch date of the NBPP. Procurement delays relating to air-conditioning systems, office equipment and police-type light bars for vehicles continue to hinder the project. The actual site, which Helmschrott visited this week, would need additional lights and monitoring equipment. In addition, the device acquired for vehicles to pass through for screenings appears to be too small. Helmschrott closed the meeting by saying that the launch date would realistically not occur on November 1st and that he now hoped it would be before December 1.

EU FACT FINDING MISSION TO BEIRUT AND DAMASCUS

[1](#)3. (C) During the meeting, EU representative, Michael Miller, answered a question from Helmschrott concerning the proposed European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) mission along the eastern border. Miller said that the EU would send a small

mission to Beirut and Damascus in the near future, but he provided no specific dates. However, Miller felt it inappropriate to discuss a sensitive project at such an early stage of development in the large group setting. Miller added that Germany and the donor countries would be involved in discussions related to an eastern border "mentoring" mission and that there would be proper coordination between the two programs.

14. (C) In a conversation after the meeting British representatives, Jeremy Chivers and Mike Chandler, expressed their doubts about the Moratinos proposal for an ESDP mission on the eastern border. Both Chivers and Chandler believe that an EU assessment team would arrive soon, but confirmed that a date had not been finalized. Chivers then added that any ESDP mission would be comprised of experts from the UK, Netherlands, France, Denmark, and Germany, and estimated that such a mission would need at least 300 EU experts and would cost at least EUR 60 million. Chandler also questioned the feasibility of such a mission operating in the vicinity of well-armed Palestinian camps located along the eastern border and expressed his skepticism that Syria would actually close such camps. The British representatives feel that Syria's overtures will prove empty in the end and they are determined to not let the EU be manipulated by Syria for PR purposes.

GERMAN LEAD OF ESDP MISSION ALMOST A GUARANTEE

15. (C) Chivers reiterated his belief that Germany will lead any future ESDP mission on the eastern border, much to his personal dismay. Chivers and Chandler outlined their

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grievances with the current German mismanagement of the Northern Border Pilot Project (NBPP) and stated their belief that the Germans did not understand the logistical or the political consequences involved in such a complex mission. Chivers said that Germany would not support a military role for the proposed ESDP mission and that any EU personnel would serve only as "mentors". Chivers added that EU "mentors" would not be searching vehicles traveling back and forth across the border. German DCM, Irene Plank, articulated a similar point of view in a September 24 meeting with DCM and Emboffs (reftel B).

16. (C) Chivers and Chandler suggested that in order for any proposed monitoring mission to succeed in the east, a steering committee of DCM-level representatives from local embassies would need to be established in Beirut. Chivers proposed that this committee be established to review the progress of an ESDP mission. According to Chivers, this committee would need to support its German counterparts if problems, similar to those that are currently affecting the NBPP, arise in the east. The British representatives strongly felt that additional technical and logistical support will need to come from either the UK government or the USG to ensure operational effectiveness. Chandler added that the new NBPP Coordinator, General Schlotz, would have to manage the logistics of the NBPP better than outgoing Coordinator Karioth, and that Schlotz must coordinate more closely with the UN Special Coordinator for Lebanon, Geir Peterson.

COMMENT

17. (C) The British representatives doubt that current talk about an ESDP mission will convert into a concrete and effective program on the ground. "Syria will show their true colors soon enough", said Chivers. Chivers and Chandler suggested that Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), rapid response teams, and live camera feeds surrounding border cross points would enhance the effectiveness of border control in the north and east. In addition, they are not

confident about the success of an ESDP mission in the east following the German model given the experience thus far with the German-led smaller pilot project in the north. The Germans should ensure that the NBPP is operational and is fully equipped before it attempts to establish itself as the lead of any larger EU mission in the east, they think. End Comment.
FELTMAN